DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 395 379 EA 027 567

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TITLE Lessons for Educational Leadership from Career Preparation in Law, Medicine, and Training for the Priesthood.
PUB DATE Apr 96
NOTE 10p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association (New York, NY, April 8-12, 1996).
PUB TYPE Speeches/Conference Papers (150) -- Reports - Evaluative/Feasibility (142)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Administrator Education; Educational Administration; *Leadership; Leadership Training; Legal Education (Professions); Medical Education; Models; *Orientation; Professional Education; *Professional Training; Religious Education; *Socialization

ABSTRACT

This paper explores three models of professional development--from medicine, law, and the Catholic priesthood--to assess the extent to which these approaches may improve the ways in which aspiring school administrators are prepared for their new positions. The review is based on an examination of research and literature in three areas: the needs of beginning principals; the nature of ongoing professional development for school administrators; and the preparation and inservice support available to physicians, attorneys, and Catholic priests. The paper concludes that the medical model (particularly, its internship program) and the legal model both adequately provide their students with technical skills, practical training, and socialization skills. However, preparation for the priesthood best addressed the development of self-awareness in its novices, particularly through mentoring relationships. The spiritual advisor, or mentor, is expected to help the future priest engage in ongoing and thoughtful review of personal values, ethical stances, moral frameworks, and personal commitment to religious and community life. Including a similar process in educational leadership preparation might be useful in helping beginning administrators come to terms with personal values and beliefs about their role. (Contains 17 references.) (LMI)

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ED 395 379

LESSONS FOR EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP FROM CAREER PREPARATION IN LAW, MEDICINE, AND TRAINING FOR THE PRIESTHOOD

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Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the
American Educational Research Association
New York, NY
April, 1996

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LESSONS FOR EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP FROM CAREER PREPARATION IN LAW, MEDICINE, AND TRAINING FOR THE PRIESTHOOD

As discussions have taken place in recent years regarding ways of improving educational practice through the redefinition of educational leadership, a considerable amount of dialogue has been centered on identifying more effective ways to prepare people to serve as school principals, superintendents, and other formal educational leaders. As evidence of this, the Danforth Foundation launched a major initiative in 1986 designed to support innovative principal preparation programs, the University Council for Educational Administration (UCEA) sponsored a review of the ways in which school administrators are prepared, the National Policy Board for Educational Administration was created, and numerous states across the nation have engaged in ambitious efforts to strengthen the standards designed to verify the quality of preservice preparation training received by aspiring administrative certificate and license holders. A new journal directed toward examining issues associated with administrator preparation (Journal of School Leadership) has been launched, and a Special Interest Group dedicated to research on teaching educational administration has been created in AERA.

In the dialogue resulting from this interest in the ways in which people are made ready to become educational leaders, certain themes have emerged. For example, there is recognition that more attention ought to be directed toward finding ways to increase the amount of clinical learning in preparation programs. Experienced administrators should be recruited to serve as mentors to aspiring leaders. Students of administration should proceed toward their goals in cohorts, and greater emphasis should be placed on developing reflective skills. The adoption of these and other recommended reform practices are said to increase the likelihood that new school administrators will be better prepared to face the complexities and demands on ever-changing and increasingly diverse communities. Further, it is suggested

that administrators will need to think in terms of life-long development of their careers. Thus, professional development of school administrators now includes discussion of preservice preparation, induction programs for new administrators, and ongoing inservice education for experienced practitioners.

A suggested strategy for the improvement of professional development of school leaders is that the field of educational leadership might be improved if we were to adopt some of the practices used in other professional fields as a way to provide initial training and ongoing inservice learning to support those who work in those fields. Thus, we have seen references over the past ten years or more referring to the likelihood that administrator preparation would be significantly improved if we were to make use of the "medical model" as a way to prepare future principals and superintendents. It may be true that borrowing certain aspects of what is done to develop good physicians may have some positive effect on the ways in which we prepare educational administrators. However, the purpose of our research has been to look more carefully at the broad assumptions that effective principals and superintendents will be prepared if we modify our professional development programs to model the best practices of medical education. In addition, we question the assumptions made regarding the adoption of practices from other professional fields such as law and also the ways in which people are made ready to step into the Catholic priesthood. In this paper, we explore these three models of professional development from medicine, law, and the priesthood to assess the extent to which these approaches are likely to add to the improvement of the ways in which individuals are likely to be made ready for the "culture shock" of stepping into a school administrative post for the first time.

Background of the Study

This review is based on an examination of research and literature in three areas. The first of these is research on the needs of beginning principals. The second is on the nature of ongoing professional development for school administrators. The third source of data comes from an examination of literature

descriptive of practices and problems associated with the preparation and inservice support available to physicians, attorneys, and Catholic priests.

Research on beginning administrators has been carried out in the United States (Daresh, 1986; Duke, 1986; Diederich, 1988; Daresh & Playko, 1992), the United Kingdom (Weindling & Earley, 1987), South Africa (van der Westhuizen, 1996), Holland, Australia, Singapore, and several other countries around the world. While there is some difference found in this research due to the diversity of cultures and educational practices and traditions in all of these settings, the overall findings of this research has been remarkably similar around the world. Basically, findings of studies looking at the critical skills needed by beginners have shown that people new to the principalship (or superintendency, or headship, etc.) experienced problems in the areas of technical skills associated with their new roles (*What do I do now that I am an administrator?*), socialization skills (*What am I supposed to look like, now that I am an administrator?*), and self awareness skills (*What do I look like, now that I am an administrator?*). While all three of these are important and must be recognized as significant problems to be faced by school leaders, particularly at the outset of their careers, it has been found that the area which is identified as most important is in the area of self awareness (Daresh & Playko, 1994). As a result, the assumption is made that, particularly in terms of professional development at the preservice and induction levels, effective programs must be directed toward helping people learn technical skills associated with their chosen profession, how to "fit in" (socialization skills), and most importantly, how people will be transformed personally through the adoption of new professional roles. The question explored in our research, then, is how well training for physicians, lawyers, and priests deals with these three areas, and what are the likely applications of those approaches to the professional development of educational leaders?

Second, this paper is based on information concerning the professional development of school leaders. The reform of leadership development programs has taken center stage in recent years. We now have numerous scholars devoting considerable time and energy in the analysis of issues associated with

more effective approaches to the preservice preparation, induction, and ongoing inservice education of leaders. This literature has suggested that educational leaders will be better served through greater emphases on reflection (Kottkamp & Osterman, 1994), focused and sequential curricula, mentoring (Daresh & Playko, 1994), more effective approaches to intern experiences (Milstein, Bobroff, & Restine, 1990), and numerous other approaches to leadership development which stray from established university-based educational administration programs (Murphy, 1992).

Third, data used in this review comes from an examination of literature describing practices followed to provide professional development for physicians (Broadhead, 1983; Konner, 1986; Hoffman, 1986; Klass, 1987), attorneys (O'Brien, 1985; Moliterno & Lederer, 1991), and Catholic priests (Dykstra, 1987; Westerhoff, 1987). The purpose of this review has been to ascertain the extent to which it was likely that any or all of the three examined approaches to preservice preparation, induction, or ongoing inservice education would likely be effective in assisting individuals who were going into educational leadership roles. Specific attention has been paid to whether or not professional development practices for physicians, attorneys, and Catholic priests would be effective in assisting people with acquiring technical skills, socialization skills, or self-awareness skills, as described in the literature related to the needs of beginning school leaders.

Conclusions

This review yielded the following observations concerning the possible application of these models to the field of educational leadership:

1. The professional development of physicians is an area with great potential applications to the improvement of the ways in which individuals might acquire greater knowledge related to the technical skills associated with the world of school administration. Specifically, the clinical experiences of medical school along with the learning experiences associated with the internship and residency are powerful tools for learning

about technical issues. Socialization skills are also acquired during internship and residency. Self awareness skills, an issues identified as an important part of medical education, are not typically addressed in any systematic or planned fashion.

2. The professional development of attorneys places a similar emphasis on the acquisition of knowledge about the craft of lawyering, to the extent that technical skills are emphasized. Socialization takes place gradually throughout law school, experiences such as moot court, law review involvement, and work in legal clinics, and also in terms of apprentice experiences gained in clerkships during summers. Self awareness is again left to the device of each student who may or may not develop a relationship with a judge or lawyer who serves as a mentor.
3. Catholic priests are prepared for their role through the study of a knowledge base related to their field and thereby learn about technical skills associated with the priesthood as they proceed through the seminary. Socialization also takes place at a number of times during the seminary experience, and as a direct consequence of seminary life. The area typically addressed in great detail as part of the priestly formation and training process provided to most young men aspiring to the priesthood is in the area of self awareness. This is accomplished through a planned process which is referred to as *formation*, and as each individual enters the seminary, he is assigned a spiritual advisor (mentor) who is expected to assist the future priest engage in an ongoing and thoughtful review of personal values, ethical stances, moral frameworks, and ultimately personal commitment to religious and community life. All of this reflection is expected of each person proceeding through the process of becoming a priest.

Implications

Our review has suggested that, while there may be much to be gained from the application of medical education practices as a way to enhance the preservice, induction, and ongoing inservice education of school administrators, that single model is limited in its overall ability to address one of the most critical needs of beginning (and likely, experienced) school administrators, namely the ability to come to terms with personal values and beliefs in the role. Legal education also offers some similar insights into the improvement of professional development practices. Somewhat surprisingly, the preparation of priests may have many powerful implications for the improvement of administrator development in ways not traditionally acknowledged by analysts of the field. Specifically, the area of self awareness is probably best addressed through the priesthood model. If that area is indeed most problematic for school leaders, perhaps the career development model might be examined more closely for its value in preparing educational leaders.

There is no effort in this review to argue the view that any single model of professional development must be rejected in total; nor is there an effort to claim that any single model must be embraced as if offered the "perfect" solution to more effective professional development for school leaders. Rather, we believe that an important implication of our work is that numerous alternative approaches might be reviewed to determine what they may offer for the improvement of our field.

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